number of *mantras* or texts were discovered which had found no place m any of the three original *Sanhitas.* These *mantras* were accepted as Vedas, but formed a distinct variety, a fourth *Sanhita* called *Atharva Veda* after its chief compiler.

They are a mixture of poetry and prose used by the *Brahmas* or presiding priests, the followers of *AtJiarm.* Before proceeding further, I may state what M. Leon Delbos, a celebrated French Philosopher, has said : " There is no monument in Greece or Rome more precious than the *Rig-Veda.*[9]

Sir W. Hunter declares: "The age of Rig Veda was unknown." Voltaire, tlie French philosopher, regarded the *Yajur Veda* as the most precious gift for which th^ West was ever indebted to the East.

The current of Vedic thought did not stop with these compilations, but flowed on swelling and deepening until in due course and in due time it received fresh tributaries from different directions in the form of external contributions called *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas,* whose object was the expounding of the *Sanhitas* and the teaching of such matters as the use of the mantras in the various sacrifices. The *Brahmanas* deal with sacrifices, liturgy and ritual. The

Aranyakas, also called forest books,
prescribe the directions
for the regulation of the spiritual life of
those who have
retired to forest for meditation and
peaceful contemplation
away from the world at the end of their
domestic lives and
aim at teaching the mental performance of
sacrifices without
the help of external appliances.
Monotheism as well as
Polytheism is taught in the *Mantra,*
Brahmana and *Aryanyaka*
portions of the Vedas.-
The stream of Hindu religious speculation
thus accelerat-
ed by the confidence, as it were, with it of
Brahmanas and
Aranyakas, rolled on, rushing and
wheeling, falling and
rising, narrowing and broadening,
according to the peculiar
features of the ages it has run through and
mtermittingly
breaking forth into a thousand channels of
sectarian, egotistic